



# Department of Justice

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## **DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND USDA ANNOUNCE SCHEDULE AND PANELISTS FOR AGRICULTURE WORKSHOP IN ALABAMA**

### ***Poultry Workshop to be Held at the Ernest L. Knight Reception Center at Alabama A & M University***

WASHINGTON – The Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the schedule and panelists for the second joint public workshop on competition and regulatory issues in agriculture, which will be held on May 21, 2010, in Normal, Ala., at the Ernest L. Knight Reception Center at Alabama A & M University. The workshop, the second of five, will focus on the poultry industry.

The workshops, which were first announced by Attorney General Eric Holder and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack on Aug. 5, 2009, are the first joint Department of Justice/USDA workshops ever to be held to discuss competition and regulatory issues in the agriculture industry. The goals of the workshops are to promote dialogue among interested parties and foster learning with respect to the appropriate legal and economic analyses of these issues, as well as to listen to and learn from parties with experience in the agriculture sector. Attendance at the workshops is free and open to the public.

The general public and media interested in attending the Alabama workshop should register at: [www.aamu.edu/saes/FAS/DOJ\\_USDA/](http://www.aamu.edu/saes/FAS/DOJ_USDA/)

U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's Antitrust Division Christine Varney will participate in the workshop, and will be joined by Congressman Artur Davis, Alabama Attorney General Troy King and Alabama Agriculture Commissioner Ron Sparks. They will participate in a roundtable discussion with presentations on current issues affecting poultry growers. Testimony and a roundtable discussion by a panel of current and former poultry growers will follow. The workshop will also feature a panel to discuss contracting and regulatory issues in the poultry industry. The workshop will also include two sessions for public testimony.

The schedule is as follows:

**9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. CDT                      Welcome/Introductory Comments**

Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Eric Holder, Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice

**9:15 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. CDT                      Roundtable Discussion and Presentation of Issues**

Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Eric Holder, Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice

Christine Varney, Assistant Attorney General for Antitrust, U.S. Department of Justice

Artur Davis, Congressman, U.S. House of Representatives

Troy King, Attorney General, state of Alabama

Ron Sparks, Agriculture Commissioner, state of Alabama

\* The Alabama Congressional Delegation is invited

**10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. CDT    Coffee Break**

**10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. CDT    Roundtable Discussion on Poultry Grower Issues**

This panel will allow a dialogue among growers, former producers and government officials. Expected topics include competition in the poultry industry, poultry contracting, contract terminations and upgrades to poultry houses. The panel will also discuss inputs that affect grower compensation, such as bird quality, feed quality and consistency.

***Moderator: Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture***

Gary Alexander, producer, Westminster, S.C.

Kay Doby, former producer, Cameron, N.C.

Garry Staples, producer, Steele, Ala.

Robert Lumzy, former producer, Columbia, Miss.

Carole Morison, former producer, Maryland.

Shane Wootten, producer, Henagar, Ala.

Sandra Genell Pridgen, producer, North Carolina

**12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. CDT    Lunch Break**

**1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. CDT                      Public Testimony**

**2:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. CDT**

**Roundtable Discussion on Trends in Poultry Production**

This panel will discuss changes in the structure of poultry production and enforcement under the Packers and Stockyards Act. Issues that will be discussed include the use of the tournament system and other methods of compensation, market access, contracting, credit availability, production efficiency/improvements and poultry house upgrades.

***Moderator: Norman Familant, Chief, Economic Litigation Section, U.S. Department of Justice***

Benny Bishop, Peco Foods, Tuscaloosa, Ala.

Michael R. Dicks, Watkins Chair, International Trade and Development, Oklahoma State University

Max Carnes, producer, Baldwin, Ga.

John Ingrum, Forest, Miss.

Cindy Johnson, attorney, Cohutta, Ga.

Robert Taylor, professor, Agricultural Economics and Public Policy, College of Agriculture, Auburn University

Mike Weaver, producer and president of Contract Poultry Growers Association of the Virginias, Fort Seybert, W.Va.

**3:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. CDT**

**Break**

**4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. CDT**

**Additional Public Testimony**

**5:00 p.m. – 5:15 p.m. CDT**

**Closing Remarks**

John Ferrell, Deputy Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Mark Tobey, Special Counsel for State Relations and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Justice

Additional information, including submitted public comments and transcripts for past workshops can be found at the Antitrust Division's agriculture workshop website at [www.justice.gov/atr/public/workshops/ag2010/index.htm](http://www.justice.gov/atr/public/workshops/ag2010/index.htm). While no streaming webcast will be available, transcripts will be available for this workshop at a later date on the Antitrust Division's website. Individuals seeking more information on the workshops should contact [agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov](mailto:agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov).

**Media who wish to attend the workshop may begin arriving at 7:30 a.m. CDT and cameras must be pre-set by 8:30 a.m. CDT. Press inquiries regarding logistics at the Ernest L. Knight Reception Center at Alabama A & M University should be directed to Jerome Saintjones at 256-372-5607 or [jerome.saintjones@aamu.edu](mailto:jerome.saintjones@aamu.edu).**

Press Contacts:

U.S. Department of Justice  
Office of Public Affairs  
Gina Talamona  
202-514-2007

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of Communications  
Jim Brownlee  
202-720-4623

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